1

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

5

1.   A postage indicium fraud detection method for permitting the automated processing of void mail pieces bearing a unique indicium, comprising:

        printing a first unique indicium on a mail piece or a label to be applied to a mail piece, which first unique indicium is adapted to be identified and sorted by automated mail handling

10

equipment and which unique indicium identifies the mail piece as being a void mail piece.

2.   The postage indicium fraud detection method of claim 1, wherein the first unique indicium comprises a unique facing

15

identification making (FIM) different from FIM A, FIM B, and FIM C, which uniquely identifies the mail piece as being a void mail piece, and which unique facing identification marking is used by automated mail handling equipment to segregate void mail pieces bearing the unique facing identification marking from mail

20

pieces not bearing the unique facing identification marking.

3.   The postage indicium fraud detection method of claim 1, wherein the first unique indicium comprises a unique postal numeric encoding technique barcode which is used by automated mail handling equipment to segregate void mail pieces bearing the

25

unique postage numeric encoding technique barcode from mail pieces not bearing the unique postage numeric encoding technique barcode.

30

4.   The postage indicium fraud detection method of claim 1, wherein an additional indicium comprising a unique postal alpha numeric encoding technology barcode is printed onto the mail piece or label for the mail piece, which unique postal alpha numeric encoding technology barcode is used to at least one of

35

identify the sender of the void mail piece, the time of the void

mail handling, and collect statistics on attempts to mail void mail pieces by the sender.

5. A postage indicium fraud detection method for permitting the automated processing of void mail pieces bearing a first unique indicium using existing automated mail handling equipment, comprising:

printing a first unique indicium on a mail piece or a label to be applied to a mail piece, which first unique indicium is adapted to be identified and sorted by automated mail handling equipment and which unique indicium identifies the mail piece as being a void mail piece; and

processing the void mail piece bearing the first unique indicium with the automated mail handling equipment to identify and segregate the void mail piece from other non-void mail pieces.

6. The postage indicium fraud detection method of claim 5, wherein the first unique indicium comprises a unique facing identification marking different from facing identification markings (FIM) FIM A, FIM B, and FIM C.

7. The postage indicium fraud detection method of claim 5, wherein the first unique indicium comprises a unique postal numeric encoding technique barcode which is used by automated mail handling equipment to segregate void mail pieces bearing the unique postal numeric encoding technique barcode from mail pieces not bearing the unique postal numeric encoding technique barcode.

8. The postage indicium fraud detection method of claim 5, further comprising printing a second unique indicia, comprising a postal alpha numeric encoding technology barcode which is used by automated mail handling equipment to identify the sender of the void mail piece, the time of the void mail handling, and

1

collect statistics on attempts to mail void mail pieces by the sender.

5

9. A postage indicium fraud detection method for permitting the automated processing and segregation of void mail pieces bearing a first unique indicium from non-void mail pieces not bearing the first unique indicium, comprising:

10

providing client software which permits a user to print information based indicia postage onto a mail piece or label for a mail piece;

having the user enter a valid delivery address, select a type of mail piece, mail class, attributes, and special services;

15

having the user verify and accept the address and any modifications thereto;

having the user select between printing a sample void information based indicia postage and a non-void information based postage indicia;

20

having a user print a sample information based postage indicia for void mail pieces and printing non-void information based postage indicia for non-void mail pieces; and

providing automated mail handling equipment which is adapted to segregate void information based postage indicia bearing mail pieces from non-void information based postage indicia bearing mail pieces.

25

10. The postage indicium fraud detection method of claim 9, further comprising printing a unique postal alpha numeric encoding technology barcode onto the mail piece or label therefor which is used by automated mail handling equipment to at least one of identify the sender of the void mail piece, the time of the void mail handling, and collect statistics on attempts to mail void mail pieces by the sender.

30

35

1

    11. A postage indicium fraud detection method for permitting the automated processing, identification, and segregation of void mail pieces bearing a first unique indicium, comprising:

5

        providing automated mail handling equipment which is adapted to sort mail based on indicia placed on mail pieces; and

        providing client software for printing a first unique indicium on a mail piece or a label to be applied to a mail piece, which first unique indicium is adapted to be identified

10

and sorted by automated mail handling equipment and which first unique indicium identifies the mail piece as being a void mail piece.

15

    12. The postage indicium fraud detection method of claim 11, wherein the client software is adapted to generate a unique postal alpha numeric encoding technology barcode, which when printed on a mail piece or label therefor is used by automated mail handling equipment to at least one of identify the

20

sender of the void mail piece, the time of the void mail handling, and collect statistics on attempts to mail void mail pieces by the sender.

25

30

35